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10-6-1959

1959-10-06, Bette to Mother, Helen, and Jody

Bette J. Barto

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Subject Terms

Women and the military, Women and war, United States -- Air Force, United States -- Army -- Air Forces, Photographs, Armed Forces -- Correspondence, Correspondence -- Vietnam War -- 1961-1975, Christmas

Summary

This collection contains 139 correspondence from Maj. Bette J. Barto, USAFE to her parents while serving as a nurse during the late 1950s and 1960s. Also included are three photographs, one special orders document, and one marriage license. In several cases, Bette refers to her parents as "Lizzie" and "Hugh Elmer," or simply "Elmer." Three letters from 1961 or 1962 are undated and placed in a separate folder.

Keywords

1959-10-06

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6 October 59
4 PM
Under the dryer.

Dear Mom, Helen & Jay.

I don't know if I'm still keeping up with galavanting Liz, but I got a letter yesterday from your house. I suppose she is still there!

I didn't even realize you had had time to get up there by last Thursday, Mom. Your bus ride didn't leave me very nervous - even in the U.S.A.!

I finally made it to the beauty parlor for the first time in over three weeks. I have been so busy that I barely had time to wash my hair myself.

Last week, if I wasn't on 3-11, I was taking golf lessons or helping Ray with school. This week I have troubles of my own. My first class with the Red Cross Nurse's Aid Volunteers began today. We were floored by the enthusiastic response of 24 women - some air force, some civilians, and some oil company wife wives from downtown Tripoli. You see, they have previously been allowed full use

of our hospital facilities, but, now,
due to our increasing air evacuation
of A.F. personnel and dependents from
Greece, Turkey, India, Saudi Arabia,
Egypt, Cote, Cyprus and as far east
as Pakistan, we are getting so over-
crowded that we are forced to begin
to cut out some of our help to the
civilians not directly associated with
the air force. Washington says if we ever
expect to get help from them we must
first stop caring for unauthorized
patients. We were afraid this was
going to cause the old Co. women to leave
the course. We are still caring for
old O.B. - Cyn cases & all children, but
will accept no new Ob. Syn patients after
1 Jan.

My board is wild as usual. I have
56 patients - only 38 beds - the rest
are boarding as convalescents on the
closed ward, where I'm teaching my
class. The football season is in full
swing here and Saturday mtn we got
in nine boys in varying stages of
'banged-up' - rough over here!
Another weekend like that and there
won't be a single whole team on base.
Our hospital Squadron team apparently
is one of the best, but also one of the
roughest on base - so they are not too

were like by their³ opponents - so they came in for some pretty heavy blows themselves.

Now, I'm still receiving pretty picture post cards from your trip to Calif. its 30-days for post cards apparently.

Polly and Emma Lee got back from a lovely leave in Germany - only 72 hours A.W.O.L. They were supposed to be here last Tues. at midnite and came wandering in at 2pm on Friday. They had tried to get a telegram to Maj. McSwalka, but she didn't receive it. Ray said they should be Court Martialed or at least receive an article 15 - a written Reprimand, but apparently they are going to get off with no punishment except a verbal reprimand. Naturally they didn't do it deliberately, but had the battle is that one is supposed to have cash enough to pay one's way back commercially if there is no direct plane coming. Thus they made no effort to do. He says there is no excuse for this. Misdeemeanor, but I guess there is with bitter young lieutenants who think the air force is a bunch of bunk anyway. They didn't even act concerned.

Ray took his ⁴mid-term exam yesterday. He was worried about it because it was so long, but apparently no one in the class completed it. Even if his grades are not all A's, at least he's been exposed to school again and the next class won't be such a shock.

0730.

Wednesday

I'm at work now. Have my class room all ready for the girls and thought I'd finish this so I can mail it. Ray and I took one of his old Commanding Officers to dinner last night and didn't get home until 10¹⁵pm, so you can imagine how much else I got done besides sitting up a uniform. As a matter of fact, Ray does that for me, nearly as rapidly as I can. That way I can wash my clothes and polish my shoes and we get done that much faster. Like I say, he's handy about the house.

I'll quit for now and do some work on my Ward Routine book. I have to finish it this week.

Love, Belle
Hug the younguns for me - they'll forget me by the time I see them again.